

Democratic Popular Front, a Moldovan party favoring reunification with Romania." While two of the men have been released, four others remain in jail, suffering inhumane living conditions, denial of medical treatment and of visits by international organizations. I cannot make a formal judgement on the merits of the Tiraspol Six case, but I will defer to the findings of international human rights and pro-Democracy organizations. Amnesty International urged the authorities to "conduct prompt, impartial and effective investigations into all allegations of ill-treatment by police and to bring those responsible to justice."

These four men remain in jail today awaiting a fair and open day in court and a right to defend themselves against the charges made against them. The United States should help to promote freedom and democracy in region, by advocating just and fair treatment in court of the people of Moldova.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for rollcall vote No. 183. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H. Con. Res. 326—the Sense of the House Resolution on the Responsibility of the Federal Government concerning the Los Alamos fire.

FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS COMPENSATION ACT

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, today I am in opposition of H.R. 1283, the Fairness in Asbestos Compensation Act, which was recently reported out of the House Judiciary Committee. Before it comes to the House floor, I want to make clear my opposition to this bill that creates a windfall for the asbestos industry but denies fair compensation to tens of thousands of American workers and their families.

Bailing out an industry that has caused harm to millions of Americans, is the ultimate slap in the face to the millions of victims affected by the deadly hazards of asbestos. Only because our court system provides accountability for these manufacturers was this deadly threat finally stopped. Now, it is no surprise that asbestos manufacturers want to use the Federal Government to override tort statutes in various States, which have brought them to law. Even more troubling, the bill will prohibit approximately 50 percent of injured asbestos victims from compensation due to new and unreasonable medical standards.

Furthermore, punitive damages would be capped at three times compensatory damages if the victim goes through an administrative hearing. Most troubling, if the victim goes to court directly, punitive damages would be prohibited entirely.

The bill forgets all scientific and health related research that has proven the link be-

tween asbestos exposure and lung disease. The bill creates a strict burden of proof for establishing that asbestos-induced diseases were caused by asbestos exposure. There is no need for this elevated burden of proof since the medical literature by the medical community supports the current substantial level of proof now required. It is estimated that under the bill, about one-half of all asbestos cancer cases now eligible for compensation would be thrown out. For the first time, asbestos lung cancer victims will need to prove that they have no smoking history; if a victim has smoked, they can be denied compensation despite the fact that in the courts this excuse has been repeatedly rejected.

Lastly, the Republican Congress, that so heartily opposes bigger government creates a new federal bureaucracy with this bill. Instead of the 100 asbestos trials a year now moving through the courts, the bill proposes the creation of an entirely new Office of Asbestos Compensation to handle work that is Constitutionally under the purview of the Judiciary system.

We should call this bill what it really is: an Asbestos Industry Preservation and Denial of Victims Act. It is one-sided, pro-defendant, and will throw victims out of court, for the sake of protecting a dangerous industry.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF THE REVEREND JOHN T. KIELB

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend John T. Kielb, pastor of the Church of the Precious Blood in Monmouth Beach, on the 25th Anniversary of his ordination.

Father Kielb is a native of Bayonne, New Jersey, where the seeds of his vocation were sown as an Altar server at Mt. Carmel Roman Catholic Church.

Father Kielb began his journey at Seton Hall University's Divinity Program, where he remained for two years until he was assigned by the Diocese of Trenton to serve his remaining two years at St. Vincent's Seminary.

He graduated in 1974 with a Masters of Divinity Degree and was ordained a Deacon later that year. He spent the following year working in a Pennsylvania parish. On May 17, 1975, Father Kielb was ordained a Priest at St. Mary's Cathedral in Trenton.

Father Kielb's first assignment was to the Sacred Heart Church of South Amboy. Subsequently, he was assigned to St. Robert Ballarmine, in Freehold; St. Gabriels, in Marlboro; and Our Lady of Sorrows, in Mercerville. On September 1, 1989, he was named the pastor at the Church of the Precious Blood in Monmouth Beach, where he has served ever since.

Father Kielb is a great asset to Central New Jersey. I urge all my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Father Kielb and his accomplishments.

LOUIS CARDONI HONORED FOR COMMUNITY WORK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Louis Cardoni of Plains Township, Luzerne County, in my district, who will be honored by the Plains Rotarians at a dinner May 21 for his role as a community leader.

Lou Cardoni has a long history of community involvement, dating back to the 1940s, when as a youngster, he helped his father develop the Hildale baseball diamond. Since that time, he has worked hard to make Hildale and all of Plains Township a showplace for recreation in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

After returning from his service in the Army, Lou resumed his strong involvement in service to the community. He was a charter member of the Hildale Community Center and is presently a member of the Plans Rotary Club, the Plains American Legion and the ITLO Club. He is a past president of the Plans Rotary and of the Hildale Community Center and is the current secretary of the ITLO Club.

Mr. Speaker, Lou chaired the Plains Recreation Board for many years, and his accomplishments on the recreation board have been a model for the community. Among his most prominent accomplishments was helping to develop the Hildale Baseball Park, which sent many boys on to the professional ranks, including Ed Ott, Randy Martz and Jim Farr, the current baseball coach at the College of William and Mary. Lou also spearheaded the development of the Birchwood Complex, one of Luzerne County's showplaces.

Working with other community leaders, Lou also helped to build three playgrounds, secure a grant for one of the first handicapped-accessible parks in Pennsylvania and obtain grants for roads and water lines in Birchwood Municipal Park and for filling a mine pit which has now been replaced with athletic fields.

Lou and his wife, the former Ellen Dooley of Plains, have three children, Louis Jr., Maureen Riley and Kathy Cardoni, and five grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the Plains community in honoring Louis Cardoni for his exceptional service, and I send my best wishes for continued success in all his endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ALTER- NATIVE COMMUNICATION DE- VICES MEDICARE COVERAGE ACT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will help America's seniors take better care of themselves. This legislation will direct the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to give Medicare beneficiaries coverage of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices ("AAC devices"). AAC devices provide individuals who are unable to speak, use sign language, or write because of cerebral palsy,